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California Farm News

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FARMERS STILL HAVE TIME TO BE COUNTED AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Census of Agriculture Forms Still Being Accepted

SACRAMENTO, February 5, 2008 – The deadline for returning completed 2007 Census of Agriculture forms may have come and gone, but it's not too late for California farmers to speak up for their communities, their industry and their futures. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reminds farmers that their voices are important and need to be heard. As a result, Census responses are still being accepted.

"A strong agricultural industry is a critical component in having a strong U.S. economy," says Vic Tolomeo, Director of the NASS California Field Office. "By providing town planners, community leaders, lawmakers and individual farm operators with the most comprehensive and accurate U.S. agricultural reports, they will have the necessary resources to make informed, sound decisions to ensure a solid future."

February 4, 2008 was the deadline for submitting the Census forms, and many farmers have responded. However, those farmers who did not submit their information by the original due date will receive another copy of the form in the mail to give them another opportunity to respond.

"Accurate, comprehensive information from all agricultural producers is important for providing a true picture of where U.S. agriculture is today and for helping people plan appropriately for their needs in the future," says Tolomeo. "This information is only gathered every five years, so we need the participation of every farmer to ensure they receive the planning tools that will provide them with the most benefit and value."

Census responses are required and protected by law. This law safeguards the privacy of individual responses. Farmers can return their forms by mail or fill out the Census online. For more information about the 2007 Census of Agriculture, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call toll-free (888) 4AG-STAT or (888) 424-7828. The Census is your voice, your future, and your responsibility.

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